

SALTON SEA TEST BASE

SOUTHWEST DIVISION NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND



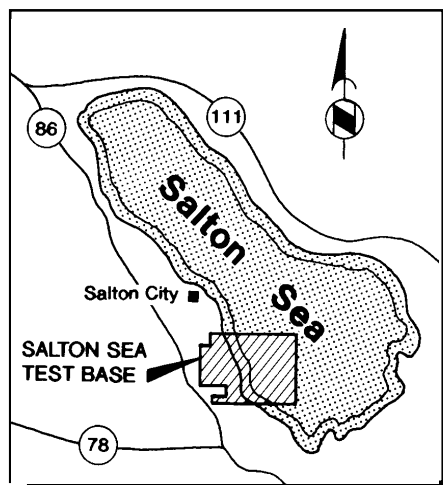
FACT SHEET

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This fact sheet is fourth in a series designed to inform the local community and other public members of the U. S. Navy's plans for formally closing the Salton Sea Test Base (SSTB) and addressing the environmental concerns at the facility. Previous fact sheets provided overviews and updates of the SSTB **Installation Restoration Program** and information on unexploded ordnance and demolition activities. These fact sheets and all the documents discussed below are available for public review at the local information repositories (see back page for locations).

This fact sheet provides information on the **Site Inspection Report**, released in draft form in October 1994. The Site Inspection Report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Site Inspection conducted at SSTB.



The Site Inspection addressed 22 sites posing a possible threat to human health or the environment, due to past handling and/or storage of hazardous materials. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Superfund Remedial Action process, Site Inspection is a technical work phase designed to collect more detailed information and follows the **Preliminary Assessment** phase. The sites addressed at SSTB were identified in the Preliminary Assessment Report (1993), and in the Site Inspection Work Plan (1993). These reports were prepared as part of the Navy's IR Program associated with readying the base for formal closure and property disposal under the Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1988.

Site Inspection at Salton Sea Test Base

The purpose of the Site Inspection was to:

- *collect information concerning the potential for a release of hazardous substances resulting in contamination, and*
- *characterize background conditions (natural setting), against which information concerning contamination related to human activities at SSTB could be compared.*

The scope and approach of the Site Inspection were based on the Site Inspection Work Plan (1993) and the

Work Plan Addendum (1994). The Site Inspection included the following tasks:

- **aerial topographic mapping;**
- **geophysical, soil gas, and radiological surveys;**
- collection and laboratory analyses of soil, **groundwater, sediment,** and surface water samples;
- land surveying;
- **aquifer testing;** and
- human health **risk screening.**

These activities were performed to:

- locate and evaluate suspected source locations of contamination, and
- identify and assess the level of potential contaminants at each location.

Methods of investigation chosen for each site were based upon available historical information concerning suspected sources of contamination, and consideration of whether the contamination is suspected to occur in soil, sediment, groundwater, and/or surface water. Sampling was conducted in locations estimated to have the highest potential for contamination.

Site Inspection at Salton Sea Test Base, cont.

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Sampling and laboratory analyses were used to identify potential contaminants at each site investigated. Specific sampling techniques varied from site to site, depending on suspected contaminants and the nature of the potentially contaminated material sampled (for example, soil or groundwater). Interviews with former employees of SSTB also contributed information on site locations and practices.

The sites investigated at SSTB can be loosely grouped into four categories of suspected sources of contamination:

- Landfills (Sites 1, 4, 11, 12, 13, and 14);
- Leach fields and septic tanks (Sites 6, 7, 20, 23, 25, and Remote Camera Site B1);
- **Aeroballistic** targets (Sites 10L and 10M); and
- Maintenance facilities and shops (Sites 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19), oiled roads (Site 21), and the small arms range (Site 22).

Background Characterization

The Site Inspection included efforts to characterize **background conditions** for metals and radioactivity, which can occur naturally in the environment at varying levels. It is necessary to distinguish between naturally

occurring (background) concentrations of these substances and concentrations representative of contamination related to the release of hazardous materials. Background characterization included sampling and analysis of soil, groundwater, sediment, and surface water in areas where, based on available information, there was no reason to suspect contamination due to past SSTB operations. This background characterization was used as a basis for comparison with samples collected at the sites under study.

Risk Screening

Risk screening was performed as part of the Site Inspection to evaluate whether the highest concentrations of contaminants detected in the samples collected present potentially significant human health risks that may warrant further investigation. The risk screening was performed using **Preliminary Remediation Goal** procedures established by the USEPA.

The risk screening was performed for potential contaminants identified through analyses of soil, sediment, and groundwater samples collected during the Site Inspection. Estimates were calculated for two kinds of risk:

- Total combined risk, which considers risks to human health presented by chemicals or substances detected by the analytical laboratory, *including* risks presented by naturally occurring background concentrations of metals and radioactivity.

- Incremental risk, which considers risks to human health presented by chemicals or substances detected by the analytical laboratory, *excluding* risks presented by naturally occurring background concentrations of metals and radioactivity. Incremental risk represents potentially significant human health effects due to the presence of contaminants related to past operations at SSTB.

The interpretation of risk screening results is qualified by the use of conservative future land and water use assumptions. At SSTB, risk estimates were based upon the potential for human exposure assuming future residential use, even though property development for housing is considered unlikely at this time. Further, assumptions of human health risks considered groundwater as a drinking water source, yet groundwater in the area does not meet general quality standards for domestic, agricultural, and industrial uses.

SITE INSPECTION REPORT

The results of the Site Inspection were presented in the Draft Site Inspection Report (October 1994). The draft report was made available to the public for review and comment, and an all-day community workshop was held in Salton City on October 22, 1994, to explain the document and its findings. At the same time the public was reviewing the draft report, the regulatory agencies --U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA); California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control (Cal/EPA DTSC); and Cal/EPA Regional Water Quality Control Board, (RWQCB) -- involved in overseeing the SSTB environmental restoration process also reviewed and commented on the document. Public and agency comments were addressed in the Pre-Final Site Inspection Report (March 1995). Copies of the public and agency comments on the draft report, with Navy responses, are available in the information repositories established for this project (see back page for locations).

The Site Inspection Report contains information on the purpose of the Site Inspection, the existing environmental setting in the vicinity of SSTB, the approach and methods used in conducting the Site Inspection, a summary of the results, a screening for risk to human health posed by potential contamination, and conclusions and recommendations.

The results of the Site Inspection compose the majority of the report. Based on these results, the following recommendations were made. It must be noted that these recommendations are subject to final approval by the overseeing regulatory agencies (USEPA, DTSC, and RWQCB) and community review and comment.

Site Inspection Report Recommendations

	Site	No Further Action	Limited Action*	Groundwater Monitoring	Feature Location	Sediment/Soil Sampling And Analyses
1	Taxiway Landfill			X		
4	Shoreline Disposal Area		X		X	X
6	Instrument Laboratory Leach Line					X
7	Dog Site Leach Field	X				
8	Bldg 4005 Grease Pit			X		
9	Bldgs 4026, 4027, 4070	X				
10MA	Old SSTB Marine Target				X	X
10MB	New SSTB Marine Target				X	X
10LA	Old SSTB Land Target				X	X
10LB	New SSTB Land Target				X	X
11	Bldg 4033 Landfill		X		X	X**
12A	E-W Runway Landfill	X				
12B/C	E-W Runway Landfill	X				
13	Gully Landfill				X	X**
14	Warehouse Landfill	X				
15	Paint Shop Bldg 4049			X		X
16	Paint Storage Bldg 4009			X		X
17	Vehicle Maint Old Bldg 5			X		
18	Old Shops Bldgs 3 and 4			X		
19	Equip Bldgs 4006-4008,4050		X	X		X***
20	Imhoff Tank		X			X***
21	Oiled Roads	X				
22	Old Small Arms Range	X				
23A	Firehouse Septic Tank		X	X		X***
23B	Instrument Lab Septic Tank	X				
23C	Residence Septic Tank	X				
23D	Residence Septic Tank	X				
23E	Old Bldg 3 Septic Tank	X				
25	Main Leach Field	X				
	Remote Camera Site B1	X				

NOTES:

FUTURE INVESTIGATIONS

An ecological risk screening currently is underway at SSTB. This study will evaluate the level of risk posed by contaminants to non-human receptors (plants and animals). The findings will be released in a **Removal Site Evaluation** report scheduled for early 1996.

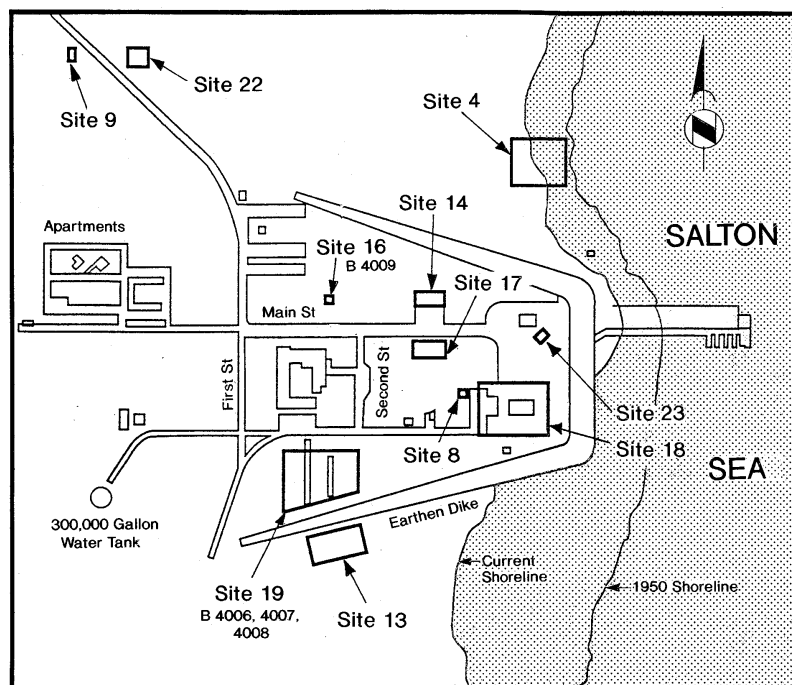
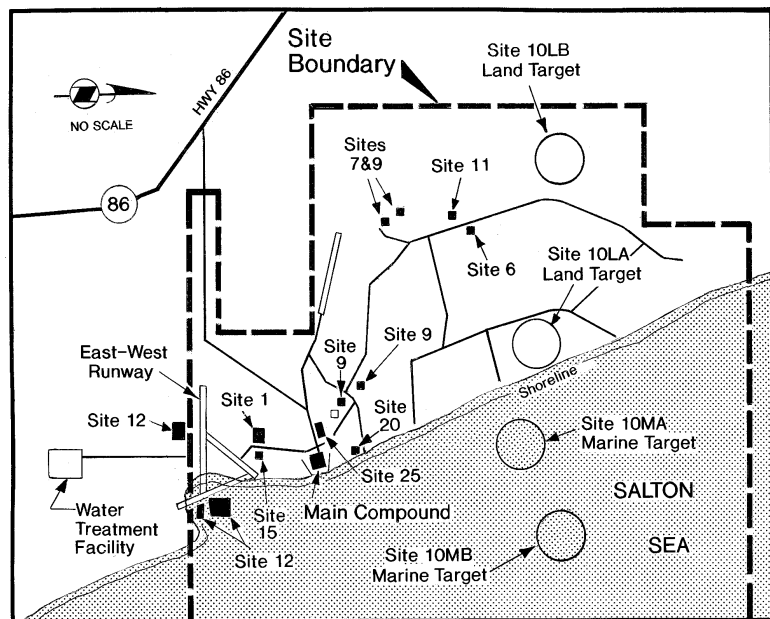
SSTB Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Update

The SSTB Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), established in May 1994, has been meeting approximately monthly, except during the summer. In October, RAB members were invited to participate in a workshop designed to promote the understanding of the Draft Site Inspection Report and review of the document. RAB comments received by the Navy were addressed in the preliminary final document.

At the October 12, 1994 RAB meeting, Ms. Shirley Lee Palmer was elected Restoration Advisory Board Community Co-Chair. She plans to be a two-way conduit for relaying information between the community and the Navy.

On December 3, 1994, the Navy conducted a tour of the SSTB IR sites. The tour was well attended by RAB members and other interested community members.

The next Restoration Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for May 17, 1995, at 7:00 PM, at the Salton City Spa and RV Park. All interested public are invited.



• G L O S S A R Y •

Aeroballistic - Pertains to the motion of the flight of missiles and projectiles in the atmosphere.

Aquifer testing - A test used to evaluate characteristics affecting storage and movement of water in the water-bearing layer of permeable rock, sand, or gravel.

Background conditions - Conditions that form the natural setting within which something is detected or measured.

Geophysical survey - The use of non-visual techniques to locate buried objects (e.g. tanks, landfills, other man-made improvements).

Groundwater - Water within the earth that moves through permeable rock, sand, or gravel.

Imhoff Tank - a tank which functioned as a digester for organics in sewage. Liquids were drained off the top of the tank and discharged. This tank design is no longer in use.

Installation Restoration (IR) Program - Developed by the Department of Defense, the Installation Restoration Program is a comprehensive environmental program conducted by the Navy to identify, investigate, and clean up hazardous waste sites at all its facilities.

Preliminary Assessment - The process of collecting and reviewing available information about a known or suspected hazardous waste site or release. This information is used to determine if a site requires further study.

Preliminary Remediation Goals - Developed by the USEPA, Preliminary Remediation Goals are risk-based concentrations used in data screening to evaluate whether a significant human health risk exists for specific compounds.

Radiological survey - A survey which measures radioactivity.

Removal Site Evaluation - The process of evaluating the need to remove contaminants

at a site. This process includes assessment of the presence and extent of contamination as well as risk to human health.

Risk screening - An evaluation performed to determine the risk posed to human health and/or the environment by the presence of contaminants.

Sediment - Soil, sand, and minerals washed from land into water.

Site Inspection - A technical phase that follows the Preliminary Assessment phase and is designed to gather more information.

Soil gas survey - Sampling and analysis of gaseous elements (for example, methane) and certain compounds in the small spaces between soil particles.

Topographic mapping - Mapping of the land surface, including elevation and natural as well as cultural features.

Information Repositories for the SSTB cleanup project have been established at two locations in the area so that the local community has an opportunity to review project documents and reports:

Salton City Library
2098 Frontage Road (Hwy 86)
Salton City, CA
(619) 394-4446

Hours: Mon - Wed - Fri
8:00 a.m. - noon
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Spencer Library Media Center
Imperial Valley College
Aten Road/Hwy 111
Imperial, CA
(619) 355-6377

Hours: Mon - Thurs: 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sat: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(except holidays)

For More Information

Mike Radecki

Remedial Project Manager, Southwest Division Naval Facilities Engineering Command
1220 Pacific Highway, Code 1832.MR, San Diego, CA 92132-5190 - (619) 532-2450

Celeste Albanez

Public Participation Specialist, Department of Toxic Substances Control
245 West Broadway, Suite 425, Long Beach, CA 90802 - (310) 590-5561

Shirley Lee Palmer

SSTB RAB Community Co-Chair, P.O. Box 5375, Salton City, CA 92275 - (619) 394-4333

MAILING LIST

Mike Radecki

Remedial Project Manager
Southwest Division Naval Facilities
Engineering Command
1220 Pacific Hwy., Code 1832.MR
San Diego, CA 92132 - 5190

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